



FINAL REPORT

Job Training Needs Study Committee

March 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator William Dotzler, Co-chairperson
Senator Larry Noble
Senator Brian Schoenjahn
Senator Roger Stewart
Senator Ron Wieck

Representative Wayne Ford, Co-chairperson
Representative Peter Cownie
Representative Greg Forristall
Representative Dave Jacoby
Representative Tom Schueller

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AUTHORIZATION AND APPOINTMENT

The Job Training Needs Study Committee was established by the Legislative Council and charged with examining various job training issues and needs, with a particular focus on underserved populations in Iowa. Underserved populations include people earning less than \$20,000 per year, minorities, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and persons convicted of felonies who are trying to reenter society after release from prison.



Job Training Needs Study Committee

I. Committee Proceedings

The Committee was authorized to conduct one meeting during the 2009 Legislative Interim. The Committee met Tuesday, November 3, 2009, in Room 22 of the State Capitol.

II. Youth Job Training Panel Discussion

A. Overview

Panelists presented information to the Committee regarding the Green Corps and the Summer Youth Corps, the Summer Youth Job Program, YouthBuild USA, Job Corps, and Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (IJAG), Inc. Panelists included Mr. Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, Iowa Department of Economic Development (DED); Mr. Jason Allen, Workforce Program Coordinator, Iowa Department of Workforce Development (IWD), and Youth Specialist for the state under the federal Workforce Investment Act; Ms. Anne Marie Wiltgen, Youth Services Coordinator, IWD; Mr. Kevin Fineran, Director, Denison Job Corps Center, U.S. Department of Labor; Ms. Judy Gierstorf, Business and Community Liaison, Denison Job Corps Center; Mr. Antione Terrell, Director of Admissions and Career Development, Denison Job Corps Center and Project Manager of Odle Management Group; and Ms. Laurie Phelan, IJAG President and CEO.

B. Green Corps and Summer Youth Corps

Mr. Lounsbury described the programs administered by the commission, including the state Green Corps and Summer Youth Corps, which are part of the state's AmeriCorps programs. Mr. Lounsbury explained that these service programs are not job training programs, but participants leave the programs with real-world experience. The commission's programs focus on assisting disadvantaged youth. The commission has developed program partnerships with IWD and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and this year started community-based learning in both urban and small communities. The commission is also developing other programs to provide at-risk youth summer learning and service opportunities, including energy-efficiency programs and sustainability food programs. Mr. Lounsbury opined that offering incentives to entice employers to employ disadvantaged youth would be helpful to the programs administered by the commission.

C. Summer Youth Job Program

Mr. Allen described the Summer Youth Job Program, which reached more than 1,200 youth participants this past year. "Every program in the state has a waiting list," he said, "and even if there was room for everyone, there is not enough funding." Youth who participate in the program receive work experiences in nonprofit and government organizations. Program participants, at least 36 percent of whom were nonwhite, included youth with disabilities, pregnant or parenting youth, dropouts, and ex-offenders. The program provides life skills, work experience, and "soft skills," such as how to come to a job on time, how to take direction, and how to understand a job description.



D. YouthBuild USA

Ms. Wiltgen discussed the YouthBuild USA program, a statewide work-to-build program for disadvantaged youth. The program is new to Iowa, having opened two chapters in the past two years. Participants range in age from 16 to 24. The federal grant funding on which the program is based is inconsistent, so the program is attempting to build a sustainable program through diverse funding. The program assists participants to attain their high school equivalency diplomas and provides training in green construction programs, preapprenticeship programs, leadership development, and first aid.

E. Job Corps

Mr. Fineran described Job Corps as a vocational job training program that teaches participants ages 16 to 24 what it takes to get a job, how to keep a job, and how to sustain a lifestyle. Child care is provided for participants who need it, as is the Headstart program. Ms. Gierstorf stated that the Job Corps takes a holistic approach by qualifying participants academically and vocationally and teaching them to give back to the community. Job Corps provides a transition program when the participants leave, assists them with resumes and cover letters, contacts employers, and helps with matching skills to jobs. Job Corps also has provisions for 12 months of follow-up assistance including transportation, and health and child care. Mr. Terrell discussed Job Corps' efforts to recruit participants from across the state with offices in many cities. Admission is limited by age and a willingness to work. The federally funded program has a 98 percent job placement rate. He suggested policymakers encourage judges to divert more youth offenders into programs like Job Corps.

F. Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates

Ms. Phelan explained that IJAG provides students at-risk of dropping out of high school with life skills and job attainment as well as academic support, assistance with postsecondary education transition, and leadership development. IJAG has a one teacher to 15 students ratio. The small program emphasis is by design and effective with a 94 percent graduation rate for the disadvantaged and at-risk students who enter the program. IJAG has partnerships with DED, IWD, and other government departments and programs in order to get students connected to new opportunities.

G. Discussion and Panelists' Recommendations

The Committee asked the panelists to demonstrate that the programs discussed are working and asked to see the data before the legislature appropriates additional funding. The panelists offered the Committee the following recommendations for youth job training needs:



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1. Seal juvenile records.
2. Replicate what works, encourage public schools to open their doors to allow private industry and connectivity partnerships, and measure the accountability and effectiveness of these partnerships through the reduction in truancy and dropout rates.
3. Increase awareness of job training programs – places that give at-risk and disadvantaged youth opportunities away from the problems that are inhibiting their success.
4. Encourage government and business partnerships – this is a team effort for young people. All entities need to work more closely together.
5. Offer employer incentives for hiring youth that complete these programs.
6. Provide additional funding for these programs and for post-program services.
7. Collaborate to connect the programs to the public and populations the programs are trying to serve.
8. Establish joint fee programs to utilize summer youth programs by using existing funding streams.

III. Job Training Programs Panel Discussion

A. Overview

Panelists discussed implementation of the state's job training programs. Panelists included Mr. Robert J. Denson, President, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC); Ms. Gail Kotval, Division Coordinator, Innovation and Commercialization Division, DED; and Mr. Steve Ovel, Executive Director, Governmental Relations, Kirkwood Community College.

B. Des Moines Area Community College

Mr. Denson provided an overview of the strong relationships between community colleges, government departments, and the business sector; observed that a variety of students are enrolling, both in ages and backgrounds, such as those seeking new skills after being laid off; and noted that each community college answers to a local board and offers programs that address local issues. He discussed the Central Iowa Works system, which is focused on business needs and utilizes six sector boards focused on special areas of career pathways, including renewable energy and health care. Business leaders play a key role in providing assistance and support. There is a reengagement center to find students who have not earned their high school equivalency diploma and who need additional services. Mr. Denson proposed a new program that involves an inner-city work station, where businesses would actually hire from this location and



people would receive training onsite, and then move to the employer's work site. Funding is scarce. Community colleges rely on state aid to operate. Federal aid follows the student, which does not allow the community college to benefit from the aid. Property taxes are less than 5 percent of the community college operating budget. Mr. Denson opined that community colleges should be targeting for enrollment every person who misses school, drops out, or is released from jail, but instead community colleges are managing waiting lists of three to four years for assistance programs. Mr. Denson recommended the state encourage the federal government to give prisoners access to Pell Grants.

C. Department of Economic Development

Ms. Kotval described the benefits of registered apprenticeship programs and recommended that DED work with community colleges to develop a strategy to increase apprenticeship training through the Code Chapter 260F Job Training Program, under the \$4 million cap, and broaden outreach to the business community.

D. Kirkwood and the Gap Tuition Assistance Program

Mr. Ovel stressed the need in this economy for low-wage, low-educated workers to receive extensive skill building and technical training in order to match them with employers who need higher-skilled workers. In order to serve underserved populations, it is often better to start individuals in a short noncredit certificate program that is aligned with a specific job. However, federal financial aid programs are only applicable to credit programs. Mr. Ovel discussed the Gap Tuition Assistance Program, which provides the necessary funding to these students. The completion or success rate is 78 percent. DMACC and Eastern Iowa Community College provide similar programs and have similar success rates. Mr. Ovel said that community colleges and the government departments are integrating services, creating one-stop centers so that a person can be fully assessed when the person seeks assistance.

IV. Workforce Self-Sufficiency Programs/Nonprofit Organizations Discussion

A. Overview

Panelists discussed IWD integration efforts and department programs and services; a partnership between IWD and the Department of Human Services (DHS); Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) efforts; the role of Iowa's nonprofits; and a multicultural workforce program offered by the private sector. Panelists included Ms. Elisabeth Buck, Director, IWD; Ms. Ann Wiebers, Division Administrator, Financial Health and Work Support, DHS; Ms. Lori Adams, Division Administrator, Workforce Center Administration Office, IWD; Mr. Matt Coulter, Chief Financial Officer, IVRS, DE; Dr. Willard "Sandy" Boyd, Founder of the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, and Professor of Law and President Emeritus of the University of Iowa; and Mr. Fernando Aveiga, representing Master Builders of Iowa (MBI).



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B. Iowa Workforce Development

Ms. Buck described the progress of the integration efforts the department is engaged in; persons served under the federal Workforce Investment Act, the services available under the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and which businesses are receiving benefits; the IowaWorks Program; the labor force participation by educational attainment in Iowa; and provided a list of the state-administered workforce education and training programs. She also updated members about the unemployment insurance training extension benefits and the September 2009, Iowa unemployment rates by county. Ms. Buck noted that as of the end of September 2009, 79,800 people in Iowa were receiving unemployment insurance benefits and another 30,000 people were unemployed and not receiving benefits. Ms. Buck stated that demands on IWD are at an unprecedented level with more than a 115 percent increase over last year in demand for services. She stressed that Iowans are being laid off through no fault of their own. In 2007, IWD said Iowa had a 150,000 worker shortage; it was not because Iowa did not have enough workers, it was because the workers Iowa had did not have the skills needed for the existing jobs – and the recession has only made this problem worse. Her recommendations were submitted after the meeting and are posted on the committee's Internet site.

C. Department of Human Services/Iowa Workforce Development

Ms. Wiebers shared information about how DHS and IWD provide cash assistance to low-income families with children through the federal Family Investment Program (FIP), the PROMISE JOBS program, and the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Ms. Wiebers said that DHS administers FIP and contracts with IWD for delivery of the PROMISE JOBS program to help families become self-supporting and meet TANF requirements. PROMISE JOBS is funded with TANF and state funds. PROMISE JOBS receives \$21.5 million total; \$13 million is from TANF funds and \$8 million is from state funds.

D. Family Investment Program

Ms. Adams explained that the FIP program is centered around the FIP agreement, which lays out what the individual will do to become self-sufficient. The case worker and program participant discuss barriers the individual may be experiencing, such as transportation, English as a second language, child care, lack of a high school diploma, and lack of soft skills. She discussed the agreement participants must sign and adhere to, as well as the sanctions when participants abandon the agreement.

E. Vocational Rehabilitation

Mr. Coulter explained that IVRS is funded by the federal Department of Education and provides services for all those with disabilities, except those with visual impairments who are assisted through another agency. IVRS assisted more than 2,200 persons in FY 2008-2009 to be placed in competitive employment. IVRS is spending less per participant to place each participant than the participants placed earn in their positions in the first year of employment. The disabilities IVRS



most commonly deals with, in order, are: cognitive impairments, physical impairments, mental disorders, and communication disorders. Of those IVRS assists and who are seeking education, most are enrolled in community college, but some go on to a four-year school. There are 115 people enrolled in a self-employment program. The top four industries where participants are placed are food preparation, office and administrative support, sales, and management. The demand for IVRS services is rising. Mr. Coulter said that persons with disabilities are the first out of a job and last hired. He offered suggestions for maximizing efficiency of the state and federal dollars for services such as collocation of offices, use of waiver dollars, and, most importantly, fully matching all available federal funds that are leveraged at \$3.69 for every state dollar.

F. Nonprofit Resource Center

Dr. Boyd discussed the critical role that nonprofit organizations play in assisting the underserved in Iowa. He noted that the decentralization of services allows each agency to assist each area with specific needs. Nonprofit employees are the fifth largest workforce in Iowa and most employees do not have health insurance. Nonprofit organizations are seeing funding, both public and private, decrease as need increases. Many Iowa nonprofits are small and underfinanced and depend heavily on volunteers.

G. Master Builders of Iowa

Mr. Aveiga provided an overview of MBI's Multicultural Workforce Program, which has the goal of providing and sustaining a high-quality number of construction workers over time. In order to do this, MBI is working to provide equitable education, career path accessibility, and cultural diversification. By 2011, 20 percent of Iowa's construction workforce will be retiring – a high number of very highly qualified individuals. MBI is focusing on interconnectivity of government, employers, educational institutions, and labor groups with workers' needs.

V. Offender Reentry Programs Panel Discussion

A. Overview

Panelists discussed the certificate of employability program, career centers in Iowa prisons, and the partnership between IWD and the Department of Corrections (DOC). Panelists included Mr. Clarence Key, Jr., Executive Director, Board of Parole; Ms. Brenda Tart, Workforce Advisor, IWD; and Mr. Jerry Bartruff, Acting Deputy Director of Offender Services and Statewide Reentry Coordinator, DOC.

B. Certificate of Employability Program

Mr. Key described the certificate of employability program, which signifies that a particular offender has completed a certain program while in prison. Thus far eight applications have been processed through the program since it began July 1. Sex offenders are excluded from the program. Iowa is only the third state, after Illinois and New York, to have the program.



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C. Iowa Workforce Development

Ms. Tart discussed the placement of workforce advisors in career centers at three prisons to provide the same kind of services to offenders as the general public receives from IWD, such as improving soft skills, skill assessment, and work readiness classes. The workforce advisors use automated job matching and referrals tailored to the offender's specific needs. IWD also assists with driver's licensure reinstatement or other transportation issues. IWD communicates with employers to let them know what DOC and IWD are doing.

D. Department of Corrections

Mr. Bartruff explained that the goal for educating and upgrading offenders' skills is to make them be productive members of society when they leave incarceration. DOC's partnership with IWD is a key element to make ex-offenders successful. DOC's goal is to have a job for each ex-offender when the person is released, which is more challenging in this economy. He stressed that when ex-offenders are social and active, they stay out of prison and communities are safer. He said that it costs about \$85 per day to keep someone in prison, but it only costs \$3.75 per day to have someone on probation or on parole. Mr. Bartruff stated that 45 percent of all inmates have some form of mental illness and a majority of Iowa's inmates are serving sentences for drug-related or nonviolent offenses. Offenders, he said, are required to pay for their education and it is a cost that many in prison cannot afford.

Panelist Recommendations

The panelists offered the Committee the following recommendations relating to offenders' job training needs:

1. Continue working with IWD.
2. Initiate a similar IWD partnership in the Fort Dodge facility.
3. Allow for education continuation.
4. Continue to fund community colleges to reach out to these institutions.

VI. Committee Discussion and Recommendations

The Committee invited persons attending the meeting to submit their suggestions for recommendations to be posted on the Committee's website. Co-chairpersons Dotzler and Ford, as agreed to by the members, submitted proposed recommendations to the members, which were approved by a majority of the members. Senators Noble and Wieck and Representatives Cownie and Forristall are recorded voting nay, expressing unanimous concern with the language which provides that certain "recommendations...are encouraged to be implemented without fiscal restraints," and stating their belief that fiscal responsibility must be a primary component in policy recommendations. The final recommendations of the Committee are as follows:



Job Training Needs Interim Study Committee Recommendations

1. The following are policy recommendations that are encouraged to be implemented without fiscal restraints:
 - a. As the Department of Workforce Development (IWD) proceeds in developing efforts to integrate its service delivery and one-stop centers, the centers should integrate apprenticeships into its business engagement strategies by encouraging the development of new apprenticeship programs. As part of that effort, apprenticeship staff should be collocated in one-stop centers to work collaboratively with federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) case managers and veterans' representatives.
 - b. Increase apprenticeship training through the Iowa Jobs Training Act, Code Chapter 260F, under the \$4 million cap established under Code Section 15.343(3).
 - c. The Department of Human Services and IWD should collaboratively look at ways to reduce the administration costs and improve the service delivery of the Family Investment Program and PROMISE JOBS Program, and recommend any changes to these programs to the legislature.
 - d. IWD should be commended for the use of discretionary funding for the Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (IJAG) program and developing a \$1 million competitive grant program using federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) dollars that the 15 regional workforce investment boards could apply for. The grants could be used for supporting existing programs or special projects for disadvantaged minority youths. After the funded projects deadlines on June 30, 2010, these projects should be evaluated for effectiveness. If more federal funds become available, the grant program is encouraged to continue and identified effective practices should be emphasized in the application process.
 - e. The Board of Parole should develop an outreach program to employers to create greater awareness of the Certificate of Employability Program.
 - f. Job training programs established under Code Chapters 260E and 260F need to identify how many jobs are created in a project and determine which projects have met their job creation goals, and this information needs to be posted on the Department of Economic Development's Internet site.
2. Agencies across Iowa state government are involved in job training. With the budget situation being compressed for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, agencies, nonprofit entities, businesses, and federal agencies should all be encouraged to look for ways for collaboration, promotion, partnering, pooling resources, and collocating programs in how they are administered.
3. IWD should examine the relative proportions of funding the state receives under WIA that is going to training, administration, or other WIA-related requirements, including



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requirements and best practices that other states have implemented in providing job training services.

4. Community colleges should look for ways to enroll the underserved populations in job training programs, in particular, training programs which are funded with workforce training and economic development funds.
5. Community colleges, businesses, and other groups that train employees should issue training completion certificates to those who successfully complete training programs.
6. The Committee identified many ideas that need to be explored when funds become available. The ideas would improve Iowa's job training efforts and participation of underserved populations. The ideas include the following:
 - a. Fund the National Career Readiness Certificate.
 - b. Increase funding for integrating adult basic education and English-as-a-second-language programs that concurrently provide students with literacy education and workforce skills.
 - c. Increase access to basic digital literacy programs.
 - d. Create a specific source of funding for short-term job training programs that are not eligible for Pell Grants.
 - e. The addition of full-time equivalent positions by the Department of Corrections to collaborate with IWD on the Offender Reentry Program.
 - f. Expand eligibility and the availability of Individual Training Accounts.
 - g. Create a tuition scholarship program for low-income workers.
 - h. Fully fund Iowa's Work-Study Program.
 - i. Encourage schools to expose students at an early age to the availability of technical training through Iowa's community colleges.
 - j. Labor unions should encourage minorities, persons with disabilities, and women to work in trades fields.
 - k. Community colleges should promote job training programs to Iowa's youth, ages 7 to 14.
 - l. Training should be made available to assist apprenticeship providers in the best practices for recruitment and retention and avoiding conflict in the workplace.
 - m. Funding for IJAG through General Fund of the State and discretionary allocations should continue. The program provides students with life skills and job attainment and assistance to a post secondary education.
 - n. When possible, government job training programs need to collaborate with non-profit, community, faith-based, and other agencies to make sure underserved populations have a part of their continued services.



VII. Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency

The following materials listed were distributed at or in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Services Agency (LSA). The materials may be accessed from the <Additional Information> link on the Committee's Internet site:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/aspx/Committees/Committee.aspx?id=485>

1. Background Memorandum.
 - Attachment A – Ron Robinson, Fiscal Services Division, LSA, Workforce Development Training Programs, published January 2009.
 - Attachment B – Letter from Ann Wiebers, DHS, and Lori Adams, IWD, containing an overview of the TANF-PROMISE JOBS Program, submitted October 27, 2009.
 - Attachment C – Steve Ovel, Kirkwood Community College, Gap Training – Skills Development for Targeted Populations, submitted October 27, 2009.
 - Attachment D1 – Joseph Mowers, IWD – Iowa Works: General Overview.
 - Attachment D2 – Joseph Mowers, IWD – Workforce Investment Act.
 - Attachment D3 – Joseph Mowers, IWD – Trade Adjustment Assistance.
 - Attachment D4 – Joseph Mowers, IWD – Unemployment Insurance Training Extension Benefits.
 - Attachment E – Skilled Worker Shortage Study Committee, Final Report, submitted to the General Assembly, January 2008.
2. Jason Allen, Summer Youth Employment Program, IWD.
3. Anne Marie Wiltgen, YouthBuild Iowa Update, IWD.
4. Kevin Fineran, Overview and Flyer, Denison Job Corps Center.
5. Laurie Phelan, Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates: Program Overview, IJAG.



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6. Robert J. Denson, "260E Is Not a Tax Credit Program," DMACC.
7. Robert J. Denson, "It's All About Job Creation and Training," DMACC.
8. Gail Kotval, IDED Recommendation for the Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F), DED.
9. Elisabeth Buck, Folder Materials and Iowa Unemployment Rates by County Chart, IWD.
10. Lori Adams, Client Flow Through FIP and PROMISE JOBS, IWD.
11. Lori Adams, Family Investment Agreement, IWD.
12. Matt Coulter, Written Comments – Overview – Success Stories, IVRS.
13. Willard "Sandy" Boyd, "Iowa Principles and Practices for Charitable Nonprofit Excellence," Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center.
14. Willard "Sandy" Boyd, Memo from Cory Lasker Regarding Iowa Nonprofit Job Training, Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center.
15. Willard "Sandy" Boyd, Nonprofit Doc Ready E-mail from Elisabeth Buck, Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center.
16. Fernando Aveiga, "Training the Builders of the Future: Multicultural Workforce Program," MBI.
17. Brenda Tart and Jerry Bartruff, Career Centers in Iowa Prisons, IWD and DOC.
18. Written comments from Rachel Scott, Iowa Department of Human Rights.
19. Written testimony from Greer Sisson, Office of Apprenticeship, U.S. Department of Labor.
20. Written testimony from Lily French, The Iowa Policy Project.
21. Written testimony submitted by Konni Cawiezell, DE.